

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

BILL: CS/SB 1096

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K-12 Committee and Senator Detert

SUBJECT: Middle Grades Civics Requirement

DATE: February 17, 2010

REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Carrouth	Matthews	ED	Fav/CS
2. _____	_____	EA	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____

Please see Section VIII. for Additional Information:

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|------------------------------|--|---|
| A. COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE..... | <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> | Statement of Substantial Changes |
| B. AMENDMENTS..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Technical amendments were recommended |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amendments were recommended |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | Significant amendments were recommended |

I. Summary:

This bill creates the Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Education Act and requires:

- Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS) for language arts to emphasize civics education concepts;
- Language arts instructional materials to include civics-related content at all grade levels;
- Completion of a one semester civics education course in the middle grades;
- Administration of an end-of-course assessment to measure student knowledge of the civics course content and passage of the assessment to earn credit; and
- Inclusion of student achievement data from the end-of-course assessment for purposes of calculating middle school grades.

This bill amends sections 1003.41, 1003.4156, 1008.22, and 1008.34 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for Social Studies were recently revised to include in-depth civics education and were adopted by the State Board of Education in

December, 2008.¹ These standards focus on comprehensive civics education in grade 7, thereby addressing the middle grades promotion requirement.

Section 1003.41, F.S., prescribes the framework for the adoption, revision, and required content of the standards in the core subject areas of language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies. Specifically, the language arts standards include reading, literature, and writing skills and require that students be exposed within all three areas of language arts to a wide range of literature. The language arts standards are currently under review as part of Florida's participation in Common Core State Standards Initiative,² with revisions scheduled to be completed in late 2010.³

Middle Grades Curriculum Requirements

Section 1003.4156(1)(a)3., F.S., requires students in grades 6 through 8 to take three middle school or higher-level courses in social studies, including one semester of a course that includes state and federal government and civics education. Students are required to take the semester course in order to be promoted from middle school. The statute, however, does not require passage of an end-of-course exam.

Currently, there is no statewide funding to support teacher professional development for implementation of the new standards in social studies. The Department of Education has, however, provided a competitive grant using federal Title 2 teacher quality funding from the U.S. Department of Education to support highly qualified teachers in social studies. A single 3-year grant was awarded in the amount of \$660,000 to Jacksonville University specifically for professional development for social studies teachers. Based on information provided by the Department of Education, the grant places an emphasis on American History, Geography, Government, and Economics, but does not specifically target civics education.⁴

The current projected expenditures for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) program do not include an end-of-course assessment for civics at the middle school level. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) currently administers a civics assessment in Florida; however, the assessment is only administered in randomly selected schools across the state in grades 4, 8, and 12. Additionally, the NAEP civics assessment is not administered annually and the NAEP scores reflect national performance; there are no results available for students, schools, or the state.

¹ The civics standards are available at: <http://www.floridastandards.org/Courses/PublicPreviewCourse560.aspx>.

² The Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, in partnership with Achieve, Inc., ACT, and the College Board have initiated a state-led process of developing a common core of state standards. This initiative builds on the work states have begun to implement high-quality standards. The standards would be research- and evidence-based, aligned with college and work expectations, include rigorous content and skills, and be internationally benchmarked. Information on the initiative is available at: http://www.ccsso.org/federal_programs/13286.cfm.

³ Telephonic conference with Florida Department of Education, February 12, 2010.

⁴ The grant involves four higher education institutions, Jacksonville University, Beacon College, Flagler College and St. Thomas University, as well as school districts, the Florida Independent College Fund (FICF) and the Florida Learning Alliance, which represents a consortium of rural school districts. Information on the grant is located at <http://democracyslab.icuf.org/>.

Prior to the 2009-10 school year, the components for school grades were identical for elementary, middle, combination, and high schools, with all components based on FCAT results. Because FCAT assesses student performance in mathematics, reading, writing, and science only, school grades have not included any measure of student achievement relative to social studies content knowledge. Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, school grades for high schools will be calculated using additional non-FCAT-based components.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill requires the language arts standards, as revised, to include integration of civics education concepts. Additionally, instructional materials used for language arts and reading instruction must include civics education content at all grade levels, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.⁵

Middle school students must complete a 1-semester civics education course for promotion from middle school, beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2012-2013 school year. This course must include the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States.⁶

The Commissioner of Education must develop and administer a statewide end-of-course assessment in civics education at the middle school level. Because the recently-revised grade 7 content standards emphasize a thorough understanding of civics concepts and include the specific civics topics required in the proposed bill, the standards could serve as the basis for an end-of-course assessment. The civics assessment would be administered as a field test during the 2012-2013 school year and, beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, would constitute 30 percent of a student's final course grade. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the civics assessment in order to pass the course and receive course credit.

Student results on the end-of-course civics examination would be used in calculating school grades, beginning with the 2013-14 school year.⁷ As part of the data compilation process for school grades, the Department of Education would be required to collect exam results and match assessment records to student records for inclusion in the school grades calculation. Based on information provided by the Department of Education, resources are currently in place to accommodate this requirement when end-of-course exam results become available.⁸ The addition of an end-of-course assessment to the school grading process for middle schools would require a new points scale for grading middle schools. Combination schools that include grades 6 through 8 would also be graded on a separate points scale adapted for middle school grading.⁹

⁵ Florida is scheduled to adopt instructional materials based on the revised language arts and reading standards beginning with K-5 in the 2012-2013 school year. See http://www.fldoe.org/BII/instruct_mat/pdf/cycle.pdf.

⁶ All required course topics are currently included in the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, addressed primarily in grade 7.

⁷ Currently, the school grading criteria for middle schools and elementary schools are the same.

⁸ The Department of Education assigns a point scale with other exam records currently included in school grading. See Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C.

⁹ Department of Education, bill analysis, October 20, 2009, on file with the Committee.

Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C., Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability, would require revision to address criteria for including end-of-course civics exam results in the school grade components for middle schools, and to describe the new grade points scale for middle schools.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The costs associated with development of an end-of-course assessment for middle grades civics would be staggered across several years. Generally, the estimated fiscal impact at the state-level for adding one examination, in one grade and subject, administered to all students, is approximately \$1,500,000 each year once fully implemented.¹⁰

Given the timeline provided in the bill, start-up activities could be phased in at a lower cost during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 fiscal years. The cost for computer-based field testing, to occur during the 2012-2013 fiscal year, would depend on the actual number of students to be tested. The cost for full implementation during the 2013-2014 would also depend on the actual number of students to be tested. The costs shown in the following chart are based on approximate costs for the annual ongoing administration of a statewide examination to all students in a single grade and subject. The approximate costs assume computer-based test administration.¹¹

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ *Id.*

**Projected Cost for Administering Statewide, Standardized
Middle School Civics Education Assessment**

FISCAL YEAR	APPROXIMATE COST	ACTIVITIES
2010-2011	\$350,000	Activities would include amending the current contract, convening educators and experts to assist in developing test and item specifications, and other start-up activities.
2011-2012	\$500,000	Activities would include developing test items, preparing field test forms, and developing administration and reporting procedures.
2012-2013	\$500,000 - \$1,000,000	Activities would include field-testing and analyzing the results of the civics end-of-course assessment. Since this would be the first year of the civics requirement, it is assumed that the field-test sample would be much smaller than the number of students to be tested in subsequent years. The actual cost would depend on the number of students to be tested, assuming computer-based administration.
2013-2014	\$1,500,000	Activities would include both development and administration tasks for full implementation. The actual cost would depend on the number of middle school students to be tested, assuming computer-based administration.
Ongoing	\$1,500,000	Projected ongoing cost for annual computer-based administration of middle school civics education assessment and reporting.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Education Pre-K-12 on February 16, 2010:

The committee substitute:

- Requires that civics education concepts be included in the revision of the state curriculum standards for language arts and reading; and
- Requires instructional materials based on the revised language arts and reading standards to include civics education content at all grades levels, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
